



Connecticut Administered State-Funded Program

General Policy A-01

Legislative Requirements for Staff Qualifications in State-Funded Programs

- ☒ OEC Child Day Care Contractors
 - ☒ OEC School Readiness Programs
 - ☒ OEC State Head Start Supplement
 - ☒ OEC Smart Start
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This general policy (GP) updates guidance on the implementation of legislation at each site receiving state funding: Child Day Care, School Readiness, [Smart Start](#) or State Head Start Supplement. All state funded programs must meet Connecticut legislative requirements for staff education qualifications.

In the programs with state-funding noted above, the percentage of designated Qualified Staff Member (QSM) distribution described in the [QSM Qualifying Options](#) table (p. 2) applies to the entire program. This includes:

1. Classrooms with children directly supported by the listed state funding streams, and
2. All other classrooms serving infants, toddlers and preschool children.

The QSM is designated for each classroom from the **individuals who meet both the definition of Teacher and QSM eligibility requirements**, and is assigned to the classroom by a program staffer with administrative access in the Connecticut Early Childhood Professional Registry, <http://www.ccacregistry.org/>

For example: If a program has three classrooms and only one classroom has children receiving state funds from any of the sources listed above, all three classrooms must have a designated QSM with a qualifying Bachelor degree or higher by July 1, 2023. In the interim, on July 1, 2020, two of those three classrooms must have a designated QSM with a qualifying Bachelor degree or higher and the third classroom may have a designated QSM with at least an Associate degree in order to meet the 50% rule. **NOTE: Public school programs that can claim one or more children through the state education cost share formula in the state funded classroom, must have an appropriately CSDE certified teacher in that classroom.**

QSM Qualifications

Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-16p is amended by [Public Act No. 18-123](#). The following QSM Qualifying Options table summarizes the legislation and provides information regarding state-funded program QSM qualification requirements. Degrees and credits must be from a regionally accredited higher education institution. For information see <https://ccacregistry.org/index.cfm?module=whatIsCollegeAccreditation&navID=nav36>. All education documentation must be on file in the Connecticut Early Childhood Professional Registry <http://www.ccacregistry.org/>

QSM Qualifying Options		
Until June 30, 2020	July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2023	July 1, 2023 and after
<p>A current CDA credential plus 12 early childhood credits, OR One of the options in the next column.</p>	<p>50% or more of the designated QSMs must have one of the following:</p> <p>A Bachelor degree or higher specific to an early childhood concentration from any regionally accredited higher education institution, OR</p> <p>A current Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) appropriate Early Childhood Certification Endorsement (see list page 6), OR</p> <p>A Bachelor degree specific to an early childhood concentration from the OEC Approved College Listing, AND a B level ECTC (Early Childhood Teacher Credential) OR</p> <p>A Bachelor degree in any other field AND 12 credits or more in early childhood or child development from any college not listed on the approved list; AND successful completion of the B level Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC) Individual Review Route; OR</p> <p>Is a Grandfathered Qualified Staff Member (QSM)</p> <p>The remaining % of designated QSMs must have, from a regionally accredited higher education institution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an Associate degree in early childhood, • an Associate degree in any field and 12 early childhood credits, or • a higher degree not identified above. 	<p>100% of the designated QSMs must have one of the following:</p> <p>A Bachelor degree or higher specific to an early childhood concentration from any regionally accredited higher education institution, OR</p> <p>A current Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) appropriate Early Childhood Certification Endorsement (see list page 6), OR</p> <p>A Bachelor degree specific to an early childhood concentration from the OEC Approved College Listing, AND a B level ECTC (Early Childhood Teacher Credential) OR</p> <p>A Bachelor degree in any other field AND 12 credits or more in early childhood or child development from any college not listed on the approved list; AND successful completion of the ECTC Individual Review Route; OR</p> <p>Is a Grandfathered Qualified Staff Member (QSM)</p>

A program not in compliance with QSM requirements by September of each funding year must have a written corrective action plan detailing the steps needed to meet QSM and a specific timeline in which these actions will be taken. Programs are expected to present these plans during monitoring visits or upon request.

For Staff Not Currently meeting QSM Requirements

Program should be actively planning to help staff achieve QSM requirements by creating individual and program-wide professional development plans. Staff should make measurable progress toward qualifications goals.

Smart Start

Each classroom with children enrolled through Smart Start must be instructed by an individual who is an employee of the local board of education and holds certification pursuant C.G.S. Sec. 10- 145b, with an endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood special education, as follows:

- 112 Integrated Early Childhood/Special Ed., Birth - K
- 113 Integrated Early Childhood/Special Ed., N/K through grade 3
- 01 PreK-Grade 8
- 02 PreK-Grade 6
- 03 PreK-Grade 3
- 08 PreK-K
- 065 Comprehensive Special Education PreK-Grade 12

Individuals holding 112 or 113 or 065 teacher certifications are required for classrooms in which a child's Individual Education Program (IEP) requires special education instruction.

The following web links are related to this policy:

OEC ECTC Approved Colleges and Approved ECE Teacher Certifications http://www.ct.gov/oec/cwp/view.asp?a=4541&q=563038
Connecticut Early Childhood Professional Registry http://www.ccacregistry.org/
Early Childhood Teacher Credential Individual Review Route (IRR ECTC) http://www.ct.gov/oec/cwp/view.asp?a=4541&q=563038
OEC Information on Regionally Accredited Higher Education Institutions https://ccacregistry.org/index.cfm?module=whatIsCollegeAccreditation&navID=nav36

For further information concerning this general policy please contact:

CHILD DAY CARE	SCHOOL READINESS	STATE HEAD START	SMART START
Deb Flis Program Specialist 860-500-4428 Deb.Flis@ct.gov	Deb Adams Program Specialist 860-500-4535 Deborah.Adams@ct.gov	Amparo Garcia Program Specialist 860-500-4427 Amparo.Garcia@ct.gov	Annette Carbone Grants & Contracts Specialist 860-500-4423 Annette.Carbone@ct.gov

Glossary of Terms for GP A-01

This glossary reflects the terms used in GP A-01 for the OEC administered state-funded programs.

<i>Administrative Staff</i>	Those individuals responsible for “planning, implementing and evaluating” a program for young children; “the role of the administrator covers both leadership and management functions (NAEYC).” This may include, but is not limited to, the following administrative team members: executive director, director, program administrator, assistant director, principal, curriculum coordinator, education coordinator, site manager.
<i>Classroom</i>	<p>A “classroom” is considered a group of children not to exceed the recommended group sizes outlined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Federal Head Start, and the OEC Child Care Center and Group Child Care Home Licensing Regulations. OEC licensed programs are required to meet child care licensing requirements for ratio and group size.</p> <p>The OEC recommends that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State-funded preschool classrooms have class sizes of 18 children or less. NOTE: Smart Start programs may not have classrooms with more than 18 children. • State-funded Infant/Toddler classrooms have class sizes of 8 children or less. The group size shall not exceed eight (8) children. <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of all the classroom staff there must be one designated QSM per classroom or group.
<i>Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC)</i>	<p>The ECTC is issued through the OEC to validate that an individual meets teacher competencies in six standards. See http://www.ct.gov/oec/lib/oec/ectc_approved_colleges_2017_rev.pdf for OEC Approved College/Teacher Certifications comprehensive listing. Higher education institutions on this listing have aligned their programs with national and Connecticut standards for early childhood preparation programs. Depending on the coursework associated with the degree, individuals can apply for an Infant/Toddler ECTC, a Preschool ECTC or both, and at the Associate and/or Bachelor degree levels. Individuals applying for the credential through an approved institution’s path to the ECTC must be enrolled in the Registry and can apply online through the applicant's Registry account at http://www.ccacregistry.org/</p> <p>NOTE: The Teacher Certifications comprehensive listing provides guidance but each individual must have verification of successful completion of the ECTC track at the college/university.</p>
<i>Early Childhood Teacher Credential Individual Review Route (IRR ECTC)</i>	<p>Individuals who do not have a full concentration in early childhood but have 12 credits in early childhood or child development may apply for an alternative route to obtain the ECTC. Information about the process for the Individual Review Route (IRR) to the ECTC can be found at http://www.ct.gov/oec/cwp/view.asp?a=4541&q=563038</p>

<i>Grandfathered Qualified Staff Member (QSM)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An individual, regardless of role, who held a Bachelor degree or higher of any type AND had 12 or more early childhood credits (ladder level 11 or higher) AND who was employed in a state-funded program on June 30, 2015 was grandfathered as meeting the qualifying degree with an expiration of 12/31/2099. • An individual, regardless of role, who held an Associate degree of any type AND had 12 or more early childhood credits (ladder level 9 or 10) AND who was employed in that same state-funded program since 1995 or before was grandfathered as meeting the qualifying degree with an expiration of 06/30/2025. Should this individual achieve a qualifying degree, the designation is updated to the new expiration. <p>Grandfathering is noted in the Registry on the individual's profile, membership card, and Education and Training Report, as well as on the program's Staff Qualifications Detail Report. This designation allows the individual to change their employment after June 30, 2015, and be hired as a designated QSM in any other state-funded program. Individual employment requirements may vary and employers may choose to require specific degrees, credentials or certifications as long as the requirements meet the minimum state guidelines.</p>
<i>NAEYC</i>	National Association for the Education of Young Children
<i>OEC Approved CSDE Teacher Certification Endorsements</i>	<p>Approved Certification Endorsements</p> <p>Below is the list of the CSDE's teacher certifications with early childhood endorsements, in accordance with C.G.S. Section 10-145b, that are accepted as meeting the state-funded staff requirement. The individual's certification must be current, not expired, and the individual must keep the certification current in order to be considered as meeting the educational requirements. If the certification is expired, individuals can apply to be reviewed under the IRR ECTC process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 113 Integrated Early Childhood/Special Ed., N/K through Grade 3 • 112 Integrated Early Childhood/Special Ed., Birth - K • 001 PreK – Grade 8 • 002 PreK – Grade 6 • 003 PreK – Grade 3 • 008 PreK – K • 065 Comprehensive Special Education PreK – Grade 12
<i>Designated Qualified Staff Member (QSM)</i>	<p>Designation given by the program's administrative access Registry user to the one individual per classroom that meets the definition of Teacher and QSM education requirements. This person must be identified in the Registry (see QSM Instructions under Program Administration prior to log in; or under My Resources – Program Administration – QSM). The Registry auto-calculates eligible QSMs and indicates the relevant expiration dates. Only eligible QSMs assigned to a specific room are made available to be chosen in the Registry in the drop down menu for that room/group.</p>
<i>Registry</i>	<p>The Connecticut Early Childhood Professional Registry at http://www.ccacregistry.org/</p>

<p><i>Regionally Accredited Higher Education Institution</i></p>	<p>The goal of higher education institution accreditation is to ensure that education provided meets acceptable levels of quality. Accreditation determines a school's eligibility for participation in federal (Title IV) and state financial aid programs. Proper accreditation is also important for the acceptance and transfers of college credit, and is a prerequisite for many graduate programs.</p> <p>Connecticut recognizes credits and degrees from regionally accredited colleges and universities.</p> <p>For more information about regional accreditation, go to https://ccacregistry.org/index.cfm?module=whatIsCollegeAccreditation&navID=nav36</p>
<p><i>Teacher (definition established in 2012; combination of essential criteria found in the definitions by Head Start and the NAEYC)</i></p>	<p>An “individual with primary responsibility for a classroom of children” is most commonly referred to as the “Teacher”. It is expected that the “Teacher” of infants, toddlers and/or preschoolers knows, understands and applies theories of child development, content knowledge across multiple domains (such as math, language and literacy –including support of dual language learners– science, creative arts, social and emotional, physical, approaches to learning, etc.). The “Teacher” also demonstrates commitment to continual professional learning performing their responsibilities consistent with the field’s ethical principles.</p> <p>The “Teacher’s” responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coordinating and engaging in the planning and implementation of experiences for young children using Connecticut’s Early Learning and Development Standards and other standards or frameworks as applicable to funding, such as Head Start; • coordinating and engaging in the observation and documentation of children’s progress; • making informed decisions, using multiple sources of information, about children’s progress across all domains of learning; • partnering with families in meaningful ways to support the development of relationships between children and their families, and sharing and gaining information pertaining to each child’s approach to learning, progress, and general health and well-being; • working with a team of professionals, such as assistant teachers, administrators, public school personnel (e.g., special education teachers, therapists, etc.) to coordinate information about children’s progress and adjust teaching practices to meet the needs of all children; • engaging in on-going professional learning opportunities to remain current with early childhood research and best practices; and • maintaining a safe and healthy learning environment. <p>All state-funded programs must keep a schedule for all classrooms at each site that provide for a Teacher to be present in each classroom for the majority of the classroom’s operating hours.</p>